

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 EURE-00 ACDA-07 EB-07 TRSE-00 OMB-01
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P R 111537Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 536
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY LISBON
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AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION NATO
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TAGS: PFOR, GR, US, TU
SUBJECT: REACTION TO LONDON MEETINGS

REF: ATHENS 4346

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. PRESIDENT CARTER'S MEETING WITH PRIME
MINISTER CARAMANLIS WAS THE FOCAL POINT OF THE MAY 11 NEWS
COVERAGE OF YESTERDAY'S DEVELOPMENTS IN LONDON. THE
CARTER-DEMIRAL ENCOUNTER AND CARAMANLIS' SPEECH TO THE
NATO SUMMIT WERE OTHER IMPORTANT STORIES. ESSENTIALLY, THE
GOVERNMENT-OPERATE TV AND RADIO PORTRAYED THE MEETING
BETWEEN THE AMERICAN AND GREEK LEADERS FAVORABLY. ON THE
OTHER HAND, MOST ATHENS NEWSPAPERS, ALL OF WHICH HAD SENT
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENTS TO LONDON FOR THE EVENT, SEIZED UPON
PRESIDENT CARTER'S PUBLIC COMMENTS AFTER SEEING TURKISH
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PRIME MINISTER DEMIREL AND INTERPRETED THEM IN ONE
DEGREE OR ANOTHER AS INDICATING THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION
HAD SHOWN A PRO-TURKISH ATTITUDE BECAUSE OF (A) THE
STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF TURKEY TO THE NATO ALLIANCE AS
WELL AS (B) THE USG'S DESIRE TO BOLSTER DEMIREL IN THE
COMING ELECTIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. GOVERNMENT-OPERATE TV AND RADIO, THROUGH WHICH MOST GREEKS GET THEIR NEWS, GAVE EXTENDED COVERAGE TO THE CARTER-CARAMANLIS MEETING, AND BROADCAST IN FULL THE PUBLIC COMMENTS BY BOTH MEN FOLLOWING THEIR PRIVATE DISCUSSION. COMMENTARY HIGHLIGHTED THE "USEFULNESS" AND "FRIENDLINESS" OF THE CONVERSATIONS. PRESIDENT CARTER'S OFFER OF AMERICAN "GOOD OFFICES" AND CARAMANLIS' CONCLUSION THAT THEIR RESPECTIVE ASSESSMENTS WERE "NOT VERY FAR APART" WERE ALSO QUOTED WIDELY. THE SEMI-OFFICIAL ATHENS NEWS AGENCY (ANA) ACCOUNTS FROM LONDON ON THE CARTER-CARAMANLIS MEETING WERE SIMILARY POSITIVE. ANA PRESENTED IN RELATIVELY FAVORABLE TERMS PRESIDENT CARTER'S SESSION WITH CARAMANLIS IN CONTRAST TO THE PRESIDENT'S SUBSEQUENT MEETING WITH DEMIREL WHERE THE LATTER VOICED "DEEP CONCERN" TO THE AMERICAN AND IN REFERENCE TO WHICH THE ANA QUOTED DIPLOMATIC SOURCES AS STATING "THE TALKS GOT NEWHERE." THE ANA REPORTED PRESIDENT CARTER'S REMARKS TO THE MEDIA AFTER THE DEMIREL MEETING IN A RATHER STRAIGHTFORWARD WAY.

3. THE ATHENS PRESS, HOWEVER, EXCEPT PERHAPS FOR THE SISTER PRO-GOVERNMENT DAILIES AKROPOLIS AND APOYEVMATINI WHICH WERE SOMEWHAT RESTRAINED, IN ONE DEGREE OR ANOTHER DWELT ON THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS AFTER HIS ENCOUNTER WITH DEMIREL. THE GENERAL TENOR OF THIS PRESS REPORTING WAS THAT THESE REMARKS SHOWED THE PRO-TURKISH ORIENTATION OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION. THE ESSENTIAL RATIONAL BEHIND CARTER'S WORDS, THE PRESS REASONED, WAS THE US CONVICTION THAT TURKEY WAS THE "KEYSTONE" OF THE NATO ALLIANCE IN THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND THAT CARTER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SOUGHT TO ASSIST DEMIREL IN THE JUNE 5 ELECTIONS IN TURKEY. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER, ALL PAPERS CARRIED FRONT-PAGE PHOTOGRAPHS OF CARTER AND CARAMANLIS TOGETHER.

4. PRO-GOVERNMENT, INDEPENDENT KATHIMERINI'S ACCOUNT WAS PARTICULARLY DETAILED IN DESCRIBING THE PRESIDENT'S SUPPORT OF ADDITIONAL MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY AND HIS SEPARATION OF THE CYPRUS ISSUE FROM THE QUESTION OF ARMS SUPPLIES. THIS WAS CITED AS PROOF OF A "NEW AMERICAN POLICY" FAVORING TURKEY AND OF A "PRO-TURKISH OPENING" BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION. PRO-GOVERNMENT AKROPOLIS WROTE THAT A SOURCE FROM THE US DELEGATION INDICATED PRESIDENT CARTER WOULD PRESS HARD FOR A SETTLEMENT ON CYPRUS AFTER THE TURKISH ELECTIONS, A LINE ALSO REFLECTED BY APOYEVMATINI. INDEPENDENT, OPPOSITION TO VIMA CLAIMED THAT WHILE CARTER DID NOT REVEAL HIS PLANS, HE NEVERTHELESS JOINED KISSINGER IN DECOUPLING CYPRUS FROM THE RESUMPTION OF MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO

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TURKEY. COMMUNIST (KKE-INTERIOR) AVGHI EDITORIALIZED
THAT CARTER SPOKE FOR CLIFFORD WHO IN TURN SPOKE FOR THE
"IMPERIALISTS," AND FIRMLY ADHERED TO ITS LINE THAT
GREECE MUST GET OUT OF NATO AND PURSUE AN INDEPENDENT
FOREIGN POLICY. COMMUNIST (KKE-EXTERIOR) RIZOSPASTIS
SAID GREEK INTERESTS FACED A "STALEMATE" IN LONDON, AND
ATTACKED NATO AS SERVING THE INTERESTS OF OTHERS BUT NOT
THOSE OF GREECE.

5. OPPOSITION, LEFTIST TA NEA CITED "DIPLOMATIC
CIRCLES IN LONDON" AS SAYING CLIFFORD WOULD UNDERTAKE ANOTHER
MISSION TO THE AREA DURING THE MONTH OF JUNE. ULTRA-
CONSERVATIVE ESTIA ATTACKED THE GOG FOR BEING A "FOLLOWER"
IN WESTERN CIRCLES, POINTING OUT THAT CARTER'S ACTIONS
IN LONDON WERE RESPONSIVE TO TURKISH AGGRESSIVENESS.
LEFTIST ELEFTHERTOTYPIA WROTE THAT CARTER WAS ADOPTING THE
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KISSINGER LINE BYSEPARATING CYPRUS FROM THE QUESTION OF
RENEWED US ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY.

6. PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS' NATO ADDRESS WAS ALSO AN
IMPORTANT NEWS ITEM. ATTENTION FOCUSSED ESPECIALLY ON HIS
REMARKS THAT (A) THE ALLIANCE'S "WEAKNESSES," WHICH HE HAD
PINPOINTED AT THE NATO SUMMIT TWO YEARS AGO, HAD NOT BEEN
OVERCOME; (B) THAT THE ALLIANCE SHOULD BE MODERNIZED SO AS
TO BE ABLE TO PROTECT ITS MEMBERS FROM THREATS NOT ONLY
FROM THE OUTSIDE BUT ALSO FROM WITHIN; (C) THAT GREECE
WOULD FULLY RETURN TO NATO WHEN THE CAUSES
(I.E., THE 1974 CYPRUS INVASION) THAT FORCED THE
WITHDRAWAL WERE REMOVED; AND (D) THAT THE GREEK-TURKISH
CONFLICT WAS DANGEROUS, BUT THAT GREECE WOULD DO ALL IT
COULD TO SETTLE IT IN A PEACEFUL AND HONORABLE MANNER.
THE PRESS ALSO PICKED UP WHAT IS BECOMING A FAMILIAR GREEK
REFRAIN IN QUOTING CARAMANLIS' REMARK THAT IT WOULD BE
HYPOCRITICAL TO ASK THE EAST TO APPLY THE PRINCIPLES OF
THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT "AND NOT APPLY IT OURSELVES, AS IS
UNFORTUNATELY THE CASE IN RELATIONS AMONG ALLIANCE MEMBERS"
(A REFERENCE, OF COURSE, TO TURKEY'S ACTIONS IN CYPRUS).

7. ILLUSTRATIVE NEWSPAPER HEADLINES ARE AS FOLLOWS:
AKROPOLIS: "CARAMANLIS-DEMIREL CONVERSATION IN CARTER'S
PRESENCE AT A LUNCH YESTERDAY-- OUR ASSESSMENTS ARE NOT
VERY FAR FROM EACH OTHER, THE GREEK PRIME MINISTER DECLARED
FOLLOWING HIS MEETING WITH CARTER"; TO VIMA: "MR CARTER
DID NOT
BXWY HIS PLANS YESTERDAY, DURING HIS 'BRIEFING'
CONVERSATION WITH MR. CARAMANLIS--PRE-ELECTORAL SUPPORT TO
MR. DEMIREL"; KATHIMERINI: "PRESIDENT CARTER DISCONNECTS
THE EMBARGO FROM THE CYPRUS PROBLEM--A UNIQUE STEP OF PRE-
ELECTORAL SUPPORT FOR MR. S. DEMIREL?"; AVGHI: "FOLLOWING
HIS MEETINGS WITH CARAMANLIS-DEMIREL, CARTER ANNOUNCED
A FLOW OF ARMS TO TURKEY--RESERVED DISAPPOINTMENT BY THE
GREEK SIDE"; RIZOSPASTIS: "ASSESSMENTS FROM THE
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CARAMANLIS-CARTER MEETING--THE INVOLVEMENT WITH NATO
PLACES NATIONAL ISSUES AT AN IMPASSE--GREECE HAS NOTHING
TO GAIN FROM THE COLD WAR MEETINGS IN LONDON--
MR. CARAMANLIS' STATEMENT: GREECE IDENTIFIES ITS FATE
COMPLETELY WITH THE FATE OF THE ALLIANCE":
ELEFTHERTYPIA: "CARTER IN KISSINGER'S ORBIT--HIS POLICY
WAS REVEALED AT THE TWO MEETINGS--HE ASKS FOR THE
TERMINATION OF THE EMBARGO--HE OVERTLY SUPPORTS
DEMIREL"; APOYEMATINI: "CARAMANLIS AND DEMIREL HAD A FRIENDLY
TALK IN CARTER'S PRESENCE-- A START FOR A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT":
TO NEA: "CARTER FAILED TO CONVINCE DEMIREL-- CARAMANLIS: THE
CRISIS IS DANGEROUS, GREECE CANNOT MAKE ANOTHER CONCESSION--

CLIFFORD'S MEDIATION MISSION IN JUNE": AND ESTIA: "CARTER
IS FOR A UNITED CYPRUS."
KUBISCH

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